

interest and may encourage trade - possibly increasing chances of collection from the wild to supply this trade.

The Wildlife Enforcement Group can be contacted by E-mail at weg@iconz.co.nz, or by writing to WEG C/- NZ Customs, Box 29, Auckland or by calling 09 3596607.

Meeting reports

Oregon, Europe & Dunedin: Plants, Gardens and Seeds. Meeting 16 June 2004
Tom Myers, Botanical Services Officer, Dunedin Botanic Garden

Reviewed by Peter Bannister

Tom took up his appointment at the Dunedin Botanic Garden in 1993, whilst still completing his MSc in marine botany at the University of Otago. Ten years later, he took a well-earned, unpaid, year off, happily leaving his ledgers and labels behind and looking forward to a bit of science and paid work in Oregon, USA. He took what he could (the dog, but not the horses) and accompanied his partner who was working on eel-grass (*Zostera*) in north-western USA. He visited lots of sandy and muddy beaches up and down the Oregon coast, and one was immediately struck by the similarity of beaches in Oregon and Otago. The exotic plants were around, broom on cliffs and marram grass on the dunes and the sea rocket (*Cakile edentula*), which occurs on New Zealand beaches (Volume IV of the Flora of New Zealand says it is from eastern North America!). There were also sea-lions and fossiliferous rocks on the shoreline cliffs, and a stuffed black and white loon of dubious provenance. There were pictures of blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium*) and insectivorous *Darlingtonia* preserved on boggy remnants, like ranks of helmeted soldiers. There was also skunk cabbage (*Lysichiton americanum*), which apparently does stink), a close relative of the arum lily. Its spathe heats up and attracts flies but also it helps the plant to melt an upward path through the spring snows, and other spring flowers like *Trillium* (I have some in my garden in Dunedin). Tom did some gardening and met *Equisetum arvense*, the horsetail, a terrible weed with wiry black rhizomes that are impossible to eradicate (I remember from my parents' garden in England). There were ventures in to the interior with painted hills and subalpine vegetation on Mt Hood (a volcanic sibling of Mt St Helens). Then across the Atlantic to Portugal. I can sympathise with Tom, it took me three days to pluck up courage to drive on the autostrada. He visited the botanic gardens at Coimbra and liked their informality, those at Bonn where access to the carnivorous plant and alpine glasshouses was apparently VERBOTEN (at least without prior arrangement), and was intrigued by botanic gardens that grew cultivated crops. Then up north to the Friesian island of Texel and its hardy (ready salted?) sheep that roam the dunes and salt marshes. (Some Texel sheep have been imported and bred in New Zealand - parts of them sometimes grace the shelves at New World). Then back to Oregon again to organic vineyards and the dangers of recycled water. It's good to see you back in Dunedin Tom: thanks for the talk!